

Global Concept of Operations

The Naval Operating Concept for Joint Operations, and the dispersed nature of the ongoing Global War on Terrorism, requires maritime force packages able to simultaneously generate combat power around the world and across the entire spectrum of conflict. Like the threat, these forces will be dispersed, yet they will remain fully netted together and seamlessly integrated into joint task forces. The Navy's former operational organization—which was built around aircraft carrier battle groups, surface action groups, and amphibious ready groups (ARGs) would not allow the Navy to meet these demands. Hence, the Navy and Marine Corps are reorganizing its forces to form 37 independent strike groups, each able to act as a deterrent to local threats or, if necessary, conduct strikes or raids. The new types of formation include:

Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs) centered on large-deck aircraft carriers accompanied by a smaller number of highly capable surface warships;

Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESGs) that combine amphibious warships and their embarked MEU(SOC)s with surface warships, submarines, and advanced airborne surveillance platforms;

Strike or missile defense surface action groups (SAGs); and,

Four converted ballistic missile submarines capable of launching large numbers of Tomahawk land-attack missiles.

The ESG concept combines the traditional, multi-mission capabilities of the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Special Operations Capable (SOC) and ARG with enhanced organic air defense, undersea warfare, and strike capability. This will provide ESGs with the ability to operate independently in low- to medium-threat environments, thereby increasing the responsiveness, operational reach, and strategic impact of the Navy and Marine Corps. In many ways, it will be the most adaptable means of response to a range of situations associated with the Global War on Terrorism.

In the future, ESGs and CSGs will be organized along with Maritime Prepositioning Groups (MPGs) into an Expeditionary Strike Force. MPGs consist of the Combat Logistics Force, Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) vessels, and a variety of high-speed surface craft,



providing both operational reinforcement and sustained endurance to the ESG, CSG, and theater assets. Together, they will form a sovereign sea base, ready to fully exploit the asymmetric advantage that the Navy-Marine Corps Team provides, by increasing the offensive and defensive power that can be projected and sustained from the sea. □

